

## Curriculum Policy

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### INTRODUCTION

The **curriculum** embraces all the intended learning opportunities, experiences and outcomes that a pupil enjoys at Rydal Penrhos School. The **academic curriculum** sits alongside the **extra-curriculum** as the two branches of the planned curriculum; however, there is also a **hidden curriculum** which is unwritten and comprises the values, norms, beliefs, behaviours and attitudes that are passed on unspoken and implicitly in the course of day-to-day School life; an example of this would be the general expectation of courtesy and tolerance within our community.

This culture of the development of the whole person seeks to find the strengths of each individual and to nurture them, and goes back to the founders of the School; pupils leave Rydal Penrhos as rounded individuals with interests in many areas of human endeavour, as young people who are well-equipped for the outside world.

Each pupil has access to a range of individual guidance provided by form/class teachers who keep a watchful eye on the overall progress of each pupil, monitoring his or her development in areas as diverse as the personal, the sporting, the dramatic, the musical and other co-curricular areas, and this in addition to his or her academic progress. Thus the School reviews closely the quality of the pupil's response to the entirety of the curriculum as delivered to each student, as well as the breadth and depth of its content on an individual basis.

Rydal Penrhos is not a school which selects entrants on the basis of the candidate's academic ability; rather, it seeks to welcome those who would benefit from the breadth of opportunities which are available at the School.

With regard to class sizes, the School seeks to keep these as small as possible, and thus the low pupil / teacher ratios represent a substantial benefit to our pupils. The culture which predominates in the classroom reflects the general culture of the School which is relaxed, open but well-disciplined nonetheless. The academic support offered to the pupils is considerable, both within the formal timetabled lessons and beyond them.

The School considers carefully the needs of pupils at each level of ability. Those who need further help will receive this from their teachers. If further assistance is needed this is available from our ALN coordinator who works closely across both sites as well as liaising with parents and external agencies as per our ALN Policy. Nevertheless, the School's key focus lies with the needs of those at the centre of the academic spectrum, and on the development of these pupils into higher achievers.

## **1. THE AIMS OF THE RYDAL PENRHOS CURRICULUM**

Rydal Penrhos School offers each pupil a wide-ranging curricular experience which enables him or her to find unexpected areas of strength which can be developed, as part of the School's aim of supporting him or her in the quest to achieve his or her full potential. That curriculum has been devised with the School's specific aims in mind, which can be described as follows:

- to promote a love of learning, and to provide a secure setting within which this may flourish;
- to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for pupils to become life-long learners;
- to recognize the range of abilities and needs of all the pupils at the School;
- to develop the key skills of numeracy, literacy and use of ICT;
- to include both formal and informal teaching opportunities inside and outside timetabled lessons, and within and beyond the campus;
- to provide an awareness of the modern world, its people and their needs, their different cultures and the importance of tolerance and acceptance of others;
- to promote equality of opportunity;
- to promote an understanding of the Welsh culture and language, and of the school's place in Wales;
- to oppose the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School, and to encourage a balanced presentation of opposing political views as well as supporting fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those of different nationalities, faiths and belief systems;
- to stand firmly against extremism of any kind;
- to promote an atmosphere of friendship and trust in which consideration is shown and tolerance exercised;
- to foster spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical, cultural and social qualities in each individual;
- to develop pupils' skills of teamwork, of problem-solving, and of independent learning;
- to create a community of well-balanced young people who are fully-prepared for the challenges and responsibilities of life beyond the School.
- to cultivate self-motivation and self-discipline as the basis of fulfilment at all levels.

## **2. THE SHAPE OF THE RYDAL PENRHOS CURRICULUM**

The School's curriculum includes a breadth of experience in the following realms:

### **Expressive Arts**

The School provides excellent facilities for teaching and performance in Music, Drama and public speaking, with music concerts and stage performances taking place on a regular basis; individual lessons are available in all instruments including voice, and also in speech and drama. We are able to enter pupils for ABRSM and LAMDA examinations. The School has its own music and art studios and is well equipped for both subjects. There are also several extra-curricular clubs on offer and each pupil gets the chance to take part in a school play at some point during the academic year.

### **Languages, Literacy and Communication**

Communication skills are at the heart of learning, and the development of the pupils' listening, reading, speaking and writing skills is paramount, providing the focus of English and Modern Foreign Language classes. All pupils learn Welsh and also Spanish. Beyond these subjects, the teaching of literacy skills is embedded in all subjects across the curriculum. KS1 use the Letters and Sounds scheme for literacy skills.

### **Mathematics and Numeracy**

The curriculum for Mathematics for children in the Prep school is taught through the Abacus scheme and skills are carefully monitored throughout the school. Pupils have their own log in and can access homework online. Mathematics is made applicable to the School's work by means of a substantial amount of hands-on and practical activities. In the Senior school the curriculum for Mathematics, Science, Design Technology, Economics and Geography (amongst other subjects) include a focus upon encouraging pupils to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and pattern in number and space, and helping them to develop the capacity to think logically.

### **Health and Well-being**

Physical Education forms a compulsory part of the curriculum throughout the Whole School. Our facilities are excellent and the school makes full use of our extensive grounds, astroturf, fitness suite, swimming pool, sailing school and sports hall. The School also has a large and well-developed Forest School (Coed y Plant) on site, and often takes pupils down to the coast for activities. This aspect of learning is also fostered strongly by the extra-curricular sporting culture at Rydal Penrhos, as well as by the extensive outdoor education programme.

### **Science & Technology**

Science, Design Technology and Food & Nutrition are taught to all pupils throughout the School. All pupils have access to purpose-built Science Labs, Food Tech Room and DT Room; the work that the pupils undertake in these places focuses upon an understanding of nature, materials and forces, and also upon developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry. For pupils in Years 7 to 13 Science, Design Technology and Food & Nutrition are taught to all pupils in Years 7 to 9; thereafter, in Science, some pupils follow the dual award course up to GCSE, with the majority taking the triple award certification which comprises the three separate Sciences. In parallel, Design Technology and Food & Nutrition may be selected as optional subjects. The work pupils undertake here focuses upon an understanding of nature, materials and forces, and also upon developing the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry.

### **Humanities**

A school Chaplain ministers to the needs of pupils and conducts regular acts of corporate worship, these taking place termly in St John's Church which forms part of the School campus. All pupils experience acts of collective worship multiple times a week across both sites. In these settings, as in many others, the School seeks to inculcate fundamental British values of respect, tolerance, individual liberty, democracy and respect for the rule of law. Pupils undertake charitable projects every term and a sense of their place in the world is fostered through visits and talks. All pupils are encouraged to lead discussions, and opportunities are available for pupil leadership throughout the school. In the Senior school all pupils have the option of taking a GCSE in Religious Studies, and matters of a spiritual nature are also discussed in the PSHE lessons which are additionally included in the curriculum

## **3. THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

All pupils have six 50 minute lessons per day, totalling 30 lessons per week. Assemblies or form time take place every day before lessons start at 0900 hours. School finishes at 1530 hours, and extra-curricular activities continue until 1620 hours, with supervised care available until 1800 hours.

### **Reception to Year 6**

Our yearly curriculum maps / schemes of work indicate which subjects are taught to which groups of children in which terms. Over each academic year, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects. Staff in year groups and subject leaders have pulled together areas of learning from different curriculum subjects which contain similar themes or links; this allows for a more creative and cross-curricular approach to learning and encourages children to apply skills in a variety of ways.

Medium term or topic plans are written to ensure coverage of the foundation subjects; and there include learning objectives and activities with differentiation identified within them. The School's short-term plans are those that the teachers write on a weekly or daily basis; these are used to set out the learning intentions for each session and to identify what resources and activities the staff will use in the lesson.

### **2023-2024 Curriculum Map**

Curriculum overviews (schemes of work) are available on the School website for all year groups.

A cross-curricular project (topic-based) approach means that many lessons take on one central theme.

### **Years 7 to 13**

Our yearly curriculum map indicates the range of subjects studied by each year group, as well as the number of lessons per week for every year group in each subject. Full details as to the subjects available in the option blocks are available in the KS4 Curriculum Booklet (covering Years 10 and 11) and the KS5 Curriculum Booklet, both of these being available on the School website.

The Senior academic curriculum is permanently under review so as to provide the optimum response to the needs of the pupils, both in terms of the subjects offered at the different stages and the nature of the examinations sat; currently, GCSEs, IGCSEs, A Levels and Cambridge Technicals are taken. As well as six lessons for each Option the KS5 curriculum also includes a PSHE slot and Careers & UCAS session.

#### 4. CURRICULUM MAP

Year Group	English	Maths	Science	Comp Science	STEM	Art	Music	Welsh	Spanish	PE/Swim /Forest	Hi/ Gg	RS	PSHE	DT/Food	Options
Rec	6	5	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	6	1	1	1	-	
Year 1	6	5	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	6	1	1	1	-	
Year 2	6	5	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	6	1	1	1	-	
Year 3	6	5	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	5	2	1	1	-	
Year 4	6	5	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	5	2	1	1	-	
Year 5	6	5	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	5	2	1	1	-	
Year 6	6	5	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	5	2	1	1	-	
Year 7	5	4	3	1	-	1	1	1	3	5	2	1	1	2	
Year 8	4	4		1	-	1	1	1		5	2	1	1	2	
Year 9	4	4	6	1	-	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	2	
Year 10	4	4	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	12
Year 11	4	4	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	12
Year 12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	18/24
Year 13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	18/24

#### 5. INCLUSION

Teachers set high expectations for every pupil. While they plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard, they have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment, or who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. The curriculum in our School is designed to provide access and opportunity for all of its children; if it is thought necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then this will be done in consultation with the child's parents / carers.

If a child has a special educational need or a disability, the School does all it can to meet these individual needs, and the provision complies with the requirements set out in the ALN Code of Practice. In most instances, if a concern arises suggesting that a child may have special educational needs, the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet these needs within the normal class organisation.

This policy is subject to review on a triennial basis; however, it may require earlier revision in the light of any regulatory change which may come into force in the interim.